



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 514-6933

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Former Peace Corps Manager Pleads Guilty to Charge, Bypassed Auction Procedures in Selling Vehicles

WASHINGTON- Ronald F. Ruybal, 57, a former manager for the Peace Corps in Ecuador, pled guilty today to one count of engaging in unauthorized activities in a matter affecting the government, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Ruybal, now of Kabul, Afghanistan, appeared today in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and pled guilty before the Honorable Magistrate Judge John M. Facciola. When he is sentenced on April 14, 2011, the defendant faces up to one year imprisonment and a fine of up to \$100,000. Under sentencing guidelines, the range is likely to be a term of probation to six months imprisonment, a fine of \$1,000 to \$10,000, and an order for restitution of \$33,000.

In connection with his guilty plea, Ruybal admitted that in late 2007 and early 2008, while employed as Peace Corps Country Director for Ecuador, he acted at the behest and direction of Fundacion Altropico (Altropico) a non-governmental organization, to bypass required Peace Corps auction procedures and cause the sale of two Peace Corps Toyota vehicles to Altropico at below in-country fair market values. Altropico was a Peace Corps partner that had received funding from the U.S. government.

Ruybal's actions led to the sale of the two Toyota Prada vehicles to Altropico for \$4,000 each, resulting in a loss to the Peace Corps of approximately \$33,000.

"Peace Corps staff members worldwide are united in providing a quality public service experience for the thousands of dedicated Americans serving as Peace Corps volunteers in 77 countries," said Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams. "There is zero-tolerance for waste, fraud or abuse of power, and I thank our Inspector General's office for their tireless effort in helping us support our core agency mission."

Peace Corps Inspector General Kathy Buller noted that stewardship of taxpayer dollars is a top Peace Corps priority: "Mr. Ruybal violated the public trust that every public servant is

sworn to uphold. As a Country Director for Peace Corps, Mr. Ruybal had a legal responsibility to act in the best interest of Peace Corps and the U.S. government. Instead Mr. Ruybal used Peace Corps resources for the private gain of another, putting in jeopardy the integrity of the Peace Corps mission and the trust of the American taxpayer.”

In announcing today’s guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the work of Peace Corps Inspector General Agents Mark Supple, Joseph Bodensteiner and Joyce Shores and the staff of the U.S. Attorney’s Office, including paralegals Jared Forney and Carolyn Cody, and Assistant U.S. Attorney John Griffith, who is prosecuting the case.

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